

Town of Bethel Town Council Meeting Minutes
July 6, 2021 | 7:00PM

(1) Meeting Called to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:02PM by Town Council President, K. Phillips. Present included Town Council President, K. Phillips, V. Proctor, M. Shaver, E. Whaley, R. Campfield, and Town Clerk, M. Hawkins.

(2) Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Town Council President, K. Phillips.

(3) Nanticoke Watershed Alliance: Lisa Wool from the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance presented on the current health of the Nanticoke River as it relates to the Town of Bethel. Ms. Wool had several handouts and provided information about the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance internship program and projects from last year conducted in Laurel and Seaford.

Several residents asked questions and the presenter responded accordingly.

(4) Secretary's Report:

(4a) Minutes from June 1, 2021 Meeting: E. Whaley presented the June Meeting Minutes. V. Proctor gave several corrections to be made. A motion was made by V. Proctor to accept the June Meeting Minutes with updates. The motion was seconded by R. Campfield. The motion passed unanimously.

(4b) Municipal Comprehensive Plan: E. Whaley presented the final draft text of the Municipal Comprehensive Plan to Council. E. Whaley asked for questions and suggestions. E. Whaley asked under Item 5, page 3 if the Town Council was comfortable pulling "N/A" under Planning Director, as the Town of Bethel does not currently have a Planning Director. R. Campfield agreed that the term "N/A" was acceptable for Item 5, Planning Director.

R. Campfield asked if the term "Mayor" should be changed to "Town Council President." E. Whaley responded by stating that the form uses "Mayor" and most places use the term interchangeably.

V. Proctor stated that the draft text was accurate. Under Item 1, second paragraph, third line, change "annexing" to "annex." V. Proctor also stated that the section that details the Ordinance Committee text should be changed to state "as of July 2021, the Ordinance Committee has reviewed eight chapters." Page 2, Item 3, second paragraph, fourth line, update to say "noise pollution."

Town Council President, K. Phillips asked if the form should omit the section that details collaboration with the Western Sussex Byway to install new signs around Town as most of the funding from the project came from DelDOT. E. Whaley stated that she would reach out to DelDOT for their opinion.

R. Campfield brought up that the Town of Bethel did not finalize the 2018 Comprehensive Plan Update as the State of Delaware does not have a record of a final report. E. Whaley stated that she would add that to the report.

V. Proctor asked if the 2008 Plan was on a word processor. Town Clerk, M. Hawkins, responded with no due to the computer crash. V. Proctor stated that the Planning and Zoning committee from three years ago made updates to the 2008 plan, so it is possible to reconstruct the plan.

(5) Town Clerk's Report: Town Clerk, M. Hawkins, presented the Town Clerk's Report. Town Clerk, M. Hawkins stated that anyone in Town that would like their birthday posted at the Community House to share the birthday with the Town Clerk or Town Council.

R. Campfield made a motion to have Kevin Mussler complete IT work in the Town Office. E. Whaley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

R. Campfield asked for more information regarding the Senior Mobility organization. Town Clerk, M. Hawkins offered to get more information before voting on the issue.

(6) Treasurer's Report:

(6a) Bills to be Paid: M. Shaver presented the Bills to be Paid. A motion was made by R. Campfield to pay the bills as presented. The motion was seconded by V. Proctor. The motion passed unanimously.

(6b) Treasurer's Report: M. Shaver presented the Treasurer's Report. R. Campfield made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. V. Proctor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(6c) Proposed Budget: M. Shaver presented the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year. V. Proctor made a motion to accept the proposed budget. R. Campfield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The use of COVID relief funds was brought up by M. Shaver. The Town of Bethel received the first portion of relief funds. M. Shaver explained the various ways the Town Council can deposit the check. E. Whaley asked if the Town Council could open a separate account for the check until the Town is given guidance from the government on

how the money may be spent. M. Shaver stated that the money would be easier to monitor this way. V. Proctor agreed that a separate check would be better for transparency.

(7) Building Permits: Town Council President, K. Phillips, presented the building permits. One permit was issued for \$25 for a replacement roof on a house.

(8) Ordinance Update: V. Proctor presented on the Ordinance Committee. There are eight chapters ready for review. V. Proctor provided an update for each draft ordinance. V. Proctor stated that if the Town Council is satisfied with the draft, then the Ordinance Committee recommends presenting the chapters for review to the Town Attorney to move forward with the formal adoption process. V. Proctor made mention of the repeal and replace process that will take place.

R. Campfield made a motion to send the draft ordinances to the Town Attorney for review. M. Shaver seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(9) Animal Population Update: Town Council President, K. Phillips stated that unless someone has something new to add to the animal population update, the issue will be tabled until the next meeting with the Town Attorney is present.

(11) Chipman Property: Town Council President, K. Phillips, skipped item 10 and moved to item 11. K. Phillips stated that the Chipman Property will be tabled until the next meeting when the Town Attorney is present.

(10) Community House Renovation Work: Town Council President, K. Phillips, moved back to item 10. M. Shaver presented on the Community House renovation work.

(12) Possible Town of Bethel Land Acquisition: M. Shaver presented the possible Town of Bethel Land Acquisition by stating that Representative Tim Dukes has \$60,000 to purchase the lot. M. Shaver stated that the money would not come from the Town of Bethel. R. Campfield stated that she spoke with a person from the State of Delaware and she understood that the Town of Bethel would not have to pay a transfer fee. The Town would only be required to pay the price of the land and attorney's fees. M. Shaver stated that the money Representative Dukes has for the lot is a result of surplus funds from the State of Delaware.

A resident spoke in favor of purchasing the lot, pointing out that the Town Council has made improvements to the Community House and the addition of parking to the Community House through use of the lot would be beneficial to the residents of the Town.

R. Campfield stated that she felt the purchase of the land would be an investment for the Town.

A resident brought up the issue of the preservation of open space and pointed out that there are very few lots available in Bethel and the lot in question is the only available lot near the Community House.

Town Council President, K. Phillips, spoke in favor of purchasing the lot as the Community House needs more parking spaces for future events. K. Phillips stated that the Town Attorney is able to conduct real estate law and would assist the Town in the purchasing of the lot.

E. Whaley asked if the Town Council would form a committee to determine an official use and maintain the lot. R. Campfield stated that the lot would not be stoned. M. Shaver stated that improvements to the lot would invite unwanted parking in the lot.

E. Whaley asked if the Town was required to contact DelDOT about the addition of a curb cut or official entrance or exit to the lot. R. Campfield stated that she did not believe that DelDOT would need to be involved as there is no elevation between the property and Main Street. R. Campfield brought up the idea of adding a crosswalk or the addition of a street sign to instruct vehicles to yield to pedestrian traffic.

R. Campfield made a motion to purchase the lot with funds from Representative Tim Dukes, pending review of the contract from the Town Attorney. M. Shaver seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(13) Old / New Business: E. Whaley provided an update on the Town of Bethel Facebook page. E. Whaley stated that she is actively trying to get the existing Facebook page shutdown in order to establish a new page as the past Council member who previously updated the page will not provide the current Town Council members with the password.

Town Council President, K. Phillips stated that resident Charlotte Givens is in grave health and expected to pass in the near future.

E. Whaley asked about the complaint form as she was unclear of the complaint form process and added for clarification. E. Whaley asked if Town Council members could collect complaint forms as it is inconvenient for residents who work during the day to fill out complaint forms at the Community House. Town Clerk, M. Hawkins responded that residents must come to the Community House to fill out a complaint form. E. Whaley stated that the policy needs written clarification on the complaint forms because several residents are confused about the policy. The topic of the complaint form will be added to the August agenda.

M. Shaver brought up that the triangle park needs to be mulched. M. Shaver received a price of \$600 to mulch the park from Lupe's Landscaping. E. Whaley made a motion to have the park mulched by Lupe's Landscaping. R. Campfield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(14)Adjourn Meeting: The meeting was adjourned at 8:42PM.

Presented by:

Emily F. Whaley
Secretary
Bethel Town Council